Referrals and Coordination of Specialty Care

703.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a process for referring inmates who need health care or specialty care that is beyond the resources available in the facility. The policy includes guidelines regarding transportation under appropriate security provisions, and the formulation of advance written agreements for around the clock or on-call availability of alternate services. Specialty care includes specialist-provided health care, such as nephrology, surgery, dermatology and orthopedics.

703.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this office that inmates have access to necessary hospitalization and specialty services for serious medical needs. This facility will provide, either directly or through contracted sources, specialty care, and emergency medical services to inmates when the need is determined by the contract medical provider.

703.3 CHIEF DEPUTY OF CORRECTIONS RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Deputy of Corrections or the authorized designee, in coordination with the contract medical provider is responsible for establishing written agreements with outside specialty health care services for emergency and urgent care that is not available within the facility. In addition, a plan shall be developed for the secure transportation of inmates to a facility where such care is available.

703.4 REFERRAL TO OFF-SITE MEDICAL CARE

A qualified health care professional shall evaluate the inmate, and if indicated, shall recommend specialty appointments in writing on the order sheet in the inmate’s medical record. A referral form should be completed and any supporting documentation attached. The written referral shall be reviewed and authorized, if appropriate, by the contract medical provider.

703.5 OFF-SITE COORDINATION

A qualified health care professional is responsible for recommending off-site medical and psychiatric care for inmates, coordinating outside appointments, and notifying supervisory custody staff of off-site transportation needs. The Chief Deputy of Corrections or designee should establish a written transportation procedure that ensures inmates are transported securely and in a timely manner for medical, mental health, dental clinic, or other specialist appointments. The procedure shall include the secure transfer of medical information to the receiving health care service.

Any conflicts that arise regarding off-site consultation trips will be communicated by the corrections deputy responsible for transportation to the Responsible Physician and Chief Deputy of Corrections or the authorized designee so that modifications may be made.

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